



A new fighter type ordered in large quantities under the expansion scheme—Gloster Gladiator. (Flight photograph.)

ACCORDING to PLAN

*A Review of the Progress of the Royal Air Force Expansion Scheme to Date :
Personnel Requirements Satisfied : Aircraft Industry's Response : New
Aerodromes and Training Schools*

IN 1914 Lord Kitchener, on taking over the office of War Minister, called first for half a million men for the Army. The men themselves were readily forthcoming, but the great problems were how to house them in barracks, to clothe them in uniform, to arm them, and to train them. Each was a great difficulty, but gradually each was overcome. The present expansion scheme of the Royal Air Force is not on the same stupendous scale, and it is not being carried out with the same vital need for speed, but, none the less, there are points in common between the two great efforts.

The problems which have lain before the Air Council may be divided into four categories: first to find the personnel, secondly to supply the aircraft, thirdly to provide stations, barracks, and aerodromes, and fourthly to arrange for training both pilots and mechanics. The opening weeks of a new year are an appropriate occasion for examining the methods adopted by the Air Council and the progress made in the eight months since the beginning of the great effort.

Let us first consider the way in which the aircraft problem has been tackled. The decision to expand came at a time when a large proportion of the existing squadrons of the R.A.F. were due for re-equipment with

new and improved types of machines. In this connection it should be made clear that this expansion scheme is mainly concerned with Air Defence of Great Britain. Quite frankly, it has been undertaken in answer to the tidings that Germany had defied the Treaty of Versailles and had built up a powerful flying corps. That made it necessary for Britain to set her defences in order. For that reason the expansion scheme should be considered as confined to the squadrons of fighters and bombers in the Command A.D.G.B. New squadrons of flying boats, or of general reconnaissance aircraft which can do the work of flying boats, will generally increase the strength of Britain just as new cruisers will do, but they do not strictly belong to this expansion scheme. Likewise any increase



"It was rightly felt that the aircraft firms could deal with the large orders required." Hart Trainers under construction. (Flight photograph.)